13: Simmons H-4 (no date) 1967 NO6 Comanche NO6
(1785-1819) New Mexico

# Introduction

OVER three quarters of a century after their final defeat on the plains of Texas, the Comanches continue to excite the interest and imagination of Western history students. This may be attributed, at least in part, to the Comanches' ferocity in battle and to their superb horsemanship, for which they were justly famous. "To fight and ride like a Comanche," was a popular saying on the frontier. But the fame of these Indians, among those who knew them at the height of their glory, rested also on the fact that Comanches were generally regarded as possessing qualities superior to those of other nomadic tribes.

In the late eighteenth century, the Spaniards of New Mexico who had been victims of Comanche raids for decades cultivated an alliance with the tribe against the common Apache foe. The Comanche's fighting abilities and his habit of keeping agreements convinced the Spanish authorities of the usefulness of establishing a permanent peace.

The distinguished colonial citizen, Pedro Bautista Pino, reported of the Comanches in 1812, that "they fulfill with the greatest care all the conditions of treaties; so that we also try to observe all stipulations therein in order not to offend them." Then he added that the Spaniards viewed these people as graceful in appearance, modest in dress and air, industrious, and in general possessing other commendable traits.